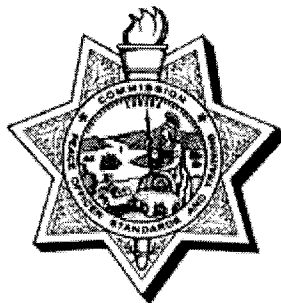


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**What Will be the Impact of Civilianization
On Police Investigations By 2002
At The Oakland Police Department?**



JOURNAL ARTICLE



California Peace Officers Standards and Training

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Introduction

As we move into the 21st Century, law enforcement must continue to develop innovative approaches for crime suppression, intervention, and prevention. A true test of leaders in law enforcement is to successfully implement these alternatives by “doing more with less”. The transition to community oriented policing is continuing at the Oakland Police Department, gaining the public’s confidence. At the same time, a strain is building on personnel to take on more duties than ever before.

One strategic approach is the civilianization of police investigations. Traditionally, sworn personnel conduct follow-up investigations, but more personnel are needed to really implement community policing. A solution to this dilemma is the focus of this article: What will be the impact of civilianization on police investigations by 2002 at the Oakland Police Department?

Civilianization in law enforcement is the utilization of civilian or non-sworn personnel in roles traditionally performed by police officers. For purposes of this article, volunteers will not be discussed. Many agencies, including the Oakland Police Department have volunteer programs, but it is not a permanent solution to this issue.

Background

This issue will be examined on its importance to the Oakland Police Department, both from an internal and external assessment. A study of trends and events will form the basis of a scenario, a snapshot of the possible future of investigations at the Oakland Police Department in 2002. A strategic and transition management plan will be proposed- plans that would make the future a reality. Recommendations, leadership implications, and evaluation activities will conclude this article.

Historical Development

The concept of civilianization probably began at the time of electronic police radios and records keeping.¹ Prior to that, police officers were utilized for direct and indirect operations of departments. Agencies used civilians for dispatching and other clerical duties until 1978.² California voters, who demanded government spending be limited, as well as a curtailed ability to raise tax revenue, passed propositions 4 and 13.

City government tax revenues were dramatically reduced, and police departments began to experience cuts. In Oakland, fewer investigators were assigned to the Criminal Investigation Division (CID). Yet, crime in the 80's and 90's continued to rise, as did investigator caseload and overtime costs to work on cases.

This economic pressure has led to a revival of the trend to civilianize positions in law enforcement that do not require sworn status.

Some agencies have gone so far as to contract traditional police services to the private sector.³

There are several reasons that this subject is important to our agency. First, there are approximately 50 vacant police officer positions, a number that has not greatly fluctuated over the past four years. While most investigators in CID are sergeants, the shortage of officers impacts the ability to promote sergeants, thereby keeping adequate sworn staffing impractical. For example, in 1993, 70 of the 72 authorized sergeant positions in CID were filled. In 1997, the number of authorized positions decreased to 52, with 45 of them filled. Although serious crime dropped slightly in 1996, investigators have high caseloads, complex investigations, and little clerical support. Due to the need to solve violent crime, overtime costs have continued to rise, leading to the department to consistently exceed its authorized overtime budget.

Staffing in property crime investigations is sacrificed for person crimes (robbery, assault, and homicide) as there is a greater priority to solve these violent crimes.

A plan is being developed to convert the sergeant investigative positions to police officers. A court decision from the late 60's abolished the detective rank and ordered investigations of felony crimes to be completed by sergeants.

If current police labor and management negotiations lead to a resolution of this issue, the burden moves from sergeant to police officer staffing.

An agreement will not solve the staffing shortages in CID, as officers are needed for patrol and community policing assignments. Any vacancies would continue to be absorbed in CID.

Secondly, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) conducted a study of the Department in 1995. They recommended the civilianization of several positions within the Criminal Investigations Division. This recommendation seeks to increase investigator productivity through the creation of a civilian investigative aide position. PERF recommends that duties such as records checks, background inquiries and research, as well as other office duties, can be handled by such a position. This would allow for a redistribution of sworn personnel should the Department continue to experience a high number of vacancies, or to supplement or supervise investigations.⁴ These issues explain the significance in examining civilianization at the Oakland Police Department.⁵

There are other factors, both present and future, that warrant consideration of this issue:

1. The costs are lower for civilian personnel than sworn; including salary, benefits, and training. Most civilian positions are not only less expensive than police officers, the training costs are not as severe.⁶

Civilians can be quickly trained for specific duties, as opposed to a long and general police academy, field, and in-service training for sworn officers.

It has been argued that specialized civilian positions merit a higher degree of pay. Based on implementation and candidate performance, this is yet to be determined.

2. Increased demand and costs for police services. The costs for delivery of police services continue to rise, due to a sworn officer's ability to perform a variety of tasks in different and often stressful situations.⁷ The training of police officers will increase, as well as their pay.

Community policing is labor-intensive, requiring a larger contingent of officers to work with the community.⁸ This agency experiences a turnover of 6 officers a month, and has been adding more duties to the patrol officer function.

3. The labor force is growing. Employment is expected to increase faster than average through 2005, with the majority of new jobs in the service industry. However, law enforcement is unlikely to attract large numbers of qualified candidates due to the inherent risks, variety of work conditions, and eligibility requirements.⁹

Yet voters are likely to approve an increased emphasis on law enforcement to reduce serious crime. Law enforcement can take advantage of the labor pool by offering positions that attract qualified individuals while minimizing turnover.¹⁰ Civilianization will attract quality candidates from this pool.

4. Greater use of technology. The use of technology will continue to provide law enforcement with an efficient tool for analyzing and combating crime. Officers will be able to conduct criminal history checks and fingerprint comparisons on the street. Computerized management systems can provide crime analysis information, as well as serve as an evaluation tool for management on crime-fighting efforts and investigator productivity. Linkage or networking between these systems and other databases will mitigate communication and information problems. Investigators need this technical support to track the movement of offenders and work on complex investigations, including link analysis and M.O. comparisons.¹¹ DNA will play an expanded role in investigations, as it will become more widely used and databases for comparison build. It is more likely that civilians with a technical background can manage and operate these systems, as well as investigate crimes involving checks, credit cards, computers and the Internet.

5. The future organization will demand it.

Law enforcement in the 21st Century will bring more civilians and fewer officers. As mentioned previously, fewer quality applicants will become attracted to law enforcement as a career.¹² Police officers will be involved in more social work than ever before as real crime issues, not symptoms, will be treated.¹³

Greater environmental concern will trigger local level enforcement. It's logical to draw from a college-educated, computer-literate pool to assist sworn personnel. The future may bring civilians to manage law enforcement agencies. These will be managers in the corporate sense, driven by performance goals, instead of dollars and cents.¹⁴ Police officers will be overwhelmed by information and calls for service-civilians can aide, even the best officer, in their duties.

Civilianization does not come without its drawbacks. One matter to address is the attitude of sworn personnel towards civilians. Officers often resent civilians who move into positions or functions traditionally held by officers. Police unions have always held firm opposing any loss in sworn positions, but the transfer of sworn positions to other areas will insure no loss in union authority.¹⁵ Yet it will undoubtedly slow any transition process. There is tension and ambiguity with the police-civilian or civilian-sworn supervisory relationship.

While both sworn and civilians operate under two separate Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), current Department policy does not support the supervision of sworn personnel by civilians.¹⁶ This area will have to be dealt with as the plan moves towards fruition. Other areas, such as a higher turnover rate for civilian employees¹⁷, will need to be resolved, either through contract or other retention measures.

In summary, the aforementioned issues illustrate that we must examine the duties and assignments of sworn personnel. Civilianization, particularly in criminal investigations, offers a specialized resource at a reduced cost. This allows sworn personnel to concentrate on the “meat” of a case, and rely on assistance from civilians to give us a “bigger bang for our buck”.

Forecasting of Trends and Events

The issue of determining the impact of civilianization on investigations has been developed through the Nominal Group Technique (NGT). This process was conducted using experts in labor, management, supervision, and civilian staff. This group identified future trends and events that could affect this issue.

The group identified the following trends:

1. Reengineering the organization

This refers to the continual reworking of units and divisions within the organization, in an effort to fulfill objectives and implement community-policing department-wide.

2. Level of Operational Change

The level in which decisions are based on each incident, not on tradition or prior performance.

3. Change in demand for technology

The movement and application of computers and other technology to supplement and provide information to personnel, as well as the use of technology to commit crimes.

4. Change in Working Conditions

The ability to provide adequate staffing the resources, based on budgetary implications.

5. Level of Labor/Union Involvement in Operations

The level in which labor and the police association play a role in department operations decision-making.

Level of Local Government funding to Law Enforcement

This refers to the level of funding received from local government by law enforcement.

7. Change in economic conditions of applicants

This refers to the economic conditions of the applicant pool.

8. Change in education level of applicants

The intellectual and education levels of the applicant pool.

9. Change in workload for law enforcement

This refers to the types of services being requested of law enforcement.

The following events were identified by the group as impacting the issue of civilianization of police investigations by 2002:

1. The Chief of Police leaves, either voluntarily or involuntarily
2. Workfare (from Welfare), where those on welfare must become employed
3. Permanent light-duty positions legalized (approved to continue employment while unable to perform a full range of law enforcement duties)

4. Police officers replace sergeants to conduct follow-up investigations
5. Police union refuses to allow civilianization of investigations
6. Police and labor union elections result in new leadership that openly supports management
7. Police department budget is cut 10%
8. City Council elections result in the shift to a conservative attitude of the council
9. Strong mayor form of government is instituted

Following the identification of trends and events, the group forecasted the probability of each of the trends and events occurring the next five and ten year periods. A cross-impact analysis was completed to determine the impact that each event would have on each trend.

The information obtained from the NGT serves as a foundation for the following scenario that describes a possible future of the civilianization of investigations at the Oakland Police Department by 2002.

SCENARIO-A NEW WAY OF DOING BUSINESS

Officer Bauer just sat down at his desk on Monday, February 7, 2002. He flips on his desktop computer to see what reports have been assigned to him. Bauer has been with the Department for seven years, and assigned to Area 2 investigations for two months. A change in the department's organizational structure and union leadership has given management more flexibility in overall assignments and allowed for six month assignments of patrol officers in other specialties to round out their background. Both the police and civilian labor unions agreed to this two-year pilot program to increase job satisfaction and performance.

Bauer sees there are two in custody for a residential burglary. Ten other reports have several leads, and stolen property lists and the evidence recovery report on perspiration from a car burglary for DNA processing.

Officer Bauer turns to Bob Gunar, a Civilian Investigative Aide (CIA) assigned to Area 2. Gunar became a CIA after completing a POST-certified academy for this classification. The classification has been in existence for three months, and this is Gunar's third week on the job.

For the past three years, law enforcement agencies have worked with POST to design specifications for civilian investigative aides to include this position among those needing limited police officer powers.

This came about as a result of intensive lobbying by labor and police unions and was supported by the California Chiefs Association.

The CIA job duties include taking the lead on forgery, fraud, and computer forensic cases, preparing search and arrest warrants for an affiant's signature, testifying to hearsay information, and accessing Criminal Offender Record Information. Legislation was passed and signed by Governor Willie Brown. POST agreed with agencies and recognized the need to have a standard civilian training program to train civilians in areas which assist sworn investigators. Training for a CIA is less intensive and costly compared to the recruit officer basic academy. Subjects taught included 832 PC, courtroom testimony, report writing, and investigative techniques.

Bauer discusses the ten cases with possible leads with Gunar, and requests the stolen property be entered in the state database. He also directs Gunar to develop the leads on the cases while Bauer interviews the in-custody suspects.

Gunar enters the stolen property information into the database, and is alerted to a suspect with a similar M.O. The subject's photo, criminal history, fingerprints, and DNA markers come up on his screen. Gunar runs the DNA comparison program, and gets a match on the auto burglary biological evidence. Based on this evidence, Gunar prepares an arrest and search warrant for the subject for Bauer to review and approve.

Sergeant Thomas checks on the status of the Civilian Training Guide at Gunar's workstation. The guide, developed as a training tool by the agency, is similar to the Field Training Officer guide used by new officers in the training program. Bauer routes a progress report on the Training Guide to the sergeant's computer. Sergeant Thomas then heads for the Computer Forensic Unit, a unit staffed by one full and three part-time CIA's.

Joe Braun is on-duty in the Computer Forensic Unit, examining a 20 gig hard drive recovered by search warrant. Braun has been loaned to the Department from Sun Microsystems, where he works as a software technician. The loan program with Sun and other Silicon Valley firms is the result of the development in the private sector of encryption programs to scramble data as it is transmitted by radio or telephonic means, or stored in databases. This has created a need for law enforcement to encrypt data for internal records, to keep it secure from "hackers". Law enforcement agencies also needed the ability to decipher data of computer criminals that utilize this new technology. Braun analyzes seized computers, obtains necessary warrants for further technical examination, and works with state legislators to codify crimes on the Internet.

The CIA's are used as generalists in accordance with the rest of the sworn complement of investigators. They follow leads on all crimes, which allows investigators more time for interviews, court testimony, and execution of warrants.

This has proved to reduce the paperwork for investigators by 32%, increased the number of warrants by 8%, and has led to the overall acceptance of CIA's by the sworn staff.

The sworn personnel see that they are able to devote more time to complex investigations, and appreciate the work of the CIAs.

Currently, two sergeants supervise 12 CIAs and the other sergeants have moved to violent crime investigations, which has dramatically reduced investigator caseload and improved clearance rate. CIAs have been hired due to their backgrounds with financial institutions as analysts, consultants, and managers. They have attended the nine week POST-certified Civilian Investigative Aide Course, and are assigned a geographical area for investigations. CIA's use a database to track crimes at the various institutions, and are able to distinguish similarities with suspects and victims to track any potential series of cases.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

We have just "seen" the future of civilianization at the Oakland Police Department. How we get there is incumbent on developing a strategic plan to carry out the implementation.

The first step is to conduct a situational analysis. One element of the analysis is to examine the current use of civilian employees in investigations.

Current Definition

There are currently nine civilian clerks, three domestic violence advocates, and five warrant clerks assigned to the Division. Their duties are primarily office-related, such as answering phones, entering report status into the Records Management System, ordering supplies, greeting the public, and processing warrants.

The domestic violence employees are advocates for victims of domestic violence, offering assistance to victims on restraining orders and rebuilding their lives. These three employees are grant funded through March of 1998, with their long-term status yet to be decided. All civilians work well with sworn staff, and there is minimal reference to the sworn/civilian attitude mentioned earlier as a disadvantage of this issue.

External Assessment

The second component of this analysis is an external assessment. PERF made a series of recommendations in 1995 regarding this issue. PERF's report suggested a broader use of civilians Department-wide, both as managers and line-level personnel.¹⁸

PERF recommended staffing the Division initially with 6 additional clerical employees. They felt that more immediate clerical support was needed, which also gave time to develop a long-range civilianization plan.¹⁹ PERF gave no timeline, but suggested the Department consider the creation of a civilian investigative aide position.

Their duties would include investigative tasks and office duties that require some skill or technical background, but do not require sworn status.²⁰ Staffing of those positions was left at the discretion of the agency.

PERF's recommendation is considered an organizational strength. The City Council has placed a great deal of emphasis in their report, and it has led to the Department receiving funding and resources it would not have without these external recommendations. It will likely be the catalyst for the implementation of this plan. Additional analysis can be gained by looking at the external opportunities that make this an attractive and practical issue.

The civilianization issue offers a significant opportunity to satisfy the public's desire to have more police officers on the street, and maintain the public's support by increasing the clearance of reported crimes.

The fear of crime continues to be a top concern of the public, as it's estimated 5 out of 6 people will be victims of violent crime at least once in their lives.²¹ The cost of crime to victims is estimated to be \$450 billion a year when the cost of pain, suffering, and the reduced quality of life is taken into consideration.²² Three strikes legislation continues to be popular in California. These considerations support a higher presence of officers, without sacrificing the quality of follow-up investigations.

Another external assessment opportunity is the increased use and availability of technology. Both hardware and software can be utilized to gain more information in less time. As these systems develop in law enforcement, it will make it more effective to shift towards civilians as investigators.

Internal Assessment

An assessment of the agency's strategic strengths and weaknesses, as they pertain to this issue, is the third part of the situational analysis.

Community-Oriented Policing is the philosophy in which the Department bases its goals and objectives. The Department's vision statement emphasizes the desire "to enhance our status as a premier law enforcement agency". The incorporation of civilians into investigations certainly could work to accomplish this vision. The Department's successes with other innovative programs demonstrate its ability to take risks and actions in the best interests of the city. This program can further strengthen the Department's stature in the community, and professional reputation.

The need for additional personnel, with tight budgetary limitations, also makes this an attractive proposal. The Department is looking for ways to enlarge its patrol complement, and this proposal fits well into this need.

Civilianization limits mobility and opportunity for sworn and non-sworn personnel.²³

An informal survey of officers revealed they would prefer promotion to the option of moving within the Department. This, however, may not be in the organization's best interests, and more research should be conducted.

Stakeholders

The final area of analysis examines stakeholders - those affected by the actions of the Department in this issue, and their impact on the issue.

The greatest impact would likely be on the sworn investigators, who will work with the civilians. The investigators will be concerned about the skill level of the civilians that will be preparing the background work and other duties. An insufficient investigation could lead to court problems and embarrassment, and cause the investigator to do more work by verifying the information developed by the civilian. This program's chances of survival depend on the effective and efficient work of the civilians, and their relationship with the sworn investigators.

Other police units have a stake in this issue. Police officers not assigned to investigations may be impacted by not having as quick an opportunity to go to investigations.

The staffing of civilians will likely decrease the need for some sworn positions. This may take away an officer's opportunity to continue on their career path and lose any incentive or promotional money.

The civilian labor union and police officer's association (POA) are also stakeholders.

The civilian labor union would add to their strength, but may seek higher wages for civilians doing the same work as higher paid investigators. The POA will be very concerned about civilians taking over jobs of sworn personnel. Both union's concerns can be handled by insuring civilians do not do the same work as sworn staff, and any sworn positions transferred but not cut.

Sworn supervisors may be taken out of their comfort zone by having civilians to manage their unit. This creates a fear on losing control, as civilians operate from different procedures than sworn staff. This can be balanced through training on the civilian procedures, and proactively reducing the apprehension.

Police management will be responsible for implementing this program, which involves negotiations with labor and deciding what duties will be assigned to the civilian staff. The program will need to be monitored and evaluated and support given as appropriate.

The management will consider budget implications, as hiring civilians without cutting sworn positions creates additional costs. Both internal and community-wide marketing of the civilian positions must occur, to bring an understanding of their duties, and illustrate the benefits they bring to the agency and city.

The community, comprised of citizens, business people, and visitors are stakeholders.

They may perceive a decrease in police service by utilizing civilians. A well-grounded marketing program aims at reducing this perception, as well as publicizing the early successes of the program.

The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) has a responsibility to set standards for law enforcement in California. This issue impacts POST, as they may need to establish guidelines and certification of civilian law enforcement positions. These actions would bring credibility to this issue, and codify duties that civilians have been unable to complete.

Other components of the criminal justice system, primarily the District Attorney's Office, will also be concerned about the expertise of the civilians as investigators, primarily for the purposes of giving testimony and evidence collection. This "uncomfortable" perception is normal with any type of significant change. Proper training and supervision should minimize this from becoming a reality.

Finally, other police agencies may perceive a diminished ability to conduct investigations with civilians. Their stake is in working with our agency with crimes committed by the same suspect(s), or just in reputation for bringing civilians in to do police work. Again, publicizing early successes will demonstrate that there is no loss in ability or expertise.

With an understanding of the situational analysis, the following strategies have been identified to develop and implement the civilianization of police investigations:

1. Establish a committee, comprised of sworn, civilian, and community members to create a civilianization program.
2. Update job classification of current civilian staff and transition them to civilian investigators.
3. Provide additional clerical and technological support for current complement of sworn investigators.

While these strategies are independent for this article, it is possible that a combination of them may provide another alternative strategy.

Establish a Committee to Create a Civilianization Program

This strategy calls for designating a group of six or seven individuals to identify the roles and responsibilities of a civilian investigator; and design implementation steps. This committee should be chaired by the Division commander, one whose goal is to achieve maximum performance, and would support the plan that accomplished that. Additional members should include investigators, civilian employees, POA representative, and members of the community. The community members could be selected from the current Civilian Police Academy Alumni Association, citizens who already have a basic understanding of the Department through attending a 42-hour course.

The committee will look at the duties of the sworn investigator, determine what the functions are that don't require sworn status, and design a civilian investigator position. One possible option for exploration is using reserve officers, who have police powers, and internally reclassifying them to gain wages and benefit packages. The composition of this committee demands merging different perceptions and ideas into the decision-making process. It also offers the advantage of the smoother transition process with the "buy in" from the major stakeholders. Civilians are currently used as oral board panelists for entry level police officers positions, and this concept has been successful. Once the duties are outlined, this group can make the recommended areas of assignment.

A disadvantage of this strategy is that the recommendations may be contrary to that of what investigators want. Investigators tend to want sole control of their cases, so the idea of civilian help will pull them out of their comfort zone.

Update Job Classification of Current Staff

This would call for Department personnel to reclassify the position of current civilian staff, who could be selected through testing or displayed levels of performance. The reclassification could take place quickly, and brings in people already part of the culture. They have an awareness of the process, and become a bigger part of it. A preestablished relationship with sworn staff is another advantage of this strategy.

The use of existing personnel may sound promising, but the main disadvantage is the limits that these individuals can achieve. Most were hired to conduct clerical duties, gather evidence, or process warrants. It is “hit or miss” on whether they can perform with more responsibility. The use of this strategy limits the ability to use candidates with expertise in areas needed to be a civilian investigator.

Provide Additional Support for Sworn Investigators

This strategy would augment the current alignment of investigators with civilian clerks and technology to gather and process information quickly. It provides an alternative to the other strategies, if the idea of civilian investigators is unfeasible, due to budget constraint or opposition.

An advantage would be the continued case control currently experienced by investigators. Their case receives efficiency measures of clerical support for report dictation and processing. It may allow investigators to come to a case resolution quicker, because of the realized duties. The public’s confidence, as well a professional reputation, will remain intact, as well as that of the criminal justice system stakeholders.

This approach, however, will create only minor changes. Caseload demands will continue to require investigators to run checks, conduct interviews, answer phone calls, and attend meetings.

It ignores the trend to civilianize non-essential sworn functions, and works against the Department's vision to be "bench marked" as a premier law enforcement agency.

This strategy does not provide relief to the investigators that the first two strategies seek to remedy. It's a fallback strategy that can be accomplished without conferring with either union.

TRANSITION MANAGEMENT

Each of the three strategies seeks to support the sworn investigator in resolving cases more efficiently than current practice. This benefit alone will not guarantee success of any strategy - a plan to move the organization to its desired state must be completed.

This transition plan will take into account the gap between ideas and reality, and seek to bring about a successful movement from today for the next five years.

As mentioned earlier, a "buy-in" from stakeholders will increase the likelihood of a successful transition. Initial and consistent resistance doom most ideas to failure.

Whether acceptance comes in the form of compromise or bartering, it will be a critical element for each strategy.

Once the decision to implement a particular strategy is made, it is important to build a core group of influential people who support this strategy 100%.

This can be built through meetings or informal gatherings where a commitment is made to vigorously support the plan. This includes internal and external support, to get stakeholder support from the beginning. It is to the organizations benefit to recognize leaders, not necessarily ranking members, who are respected and trusted by many employees.

The communication/marketing of this strategy would be accomplished through processes already in place, and ones to be developed. Those currently existing include weekly unit commander meetings which result in published minutes distributed to all employees; patrol briefing presentations, either in person or on video; weekly and bi-weekly unit and squad meetings; and posting on Department bulletin boards. Externally, this can be accomplished in the Citizen Police Academy and Alumni sessions; Home Alert and other community group meetings; City Council Public Safety Committee and full City Council sessions; and through the local media, including the city-operated cable television station.

Processes to be developed include FaxAlert, a fax notification system to many city businesses; an alert system called CityWatch that can be utilized for computer-based telephone surveys; and electronic mail sent to the Department's Internet web page. All of these channels can be utilized to communicate the start-up of the process, progress reports, and implementation. Once this mechanism is in place, each strategy can be further organized and implemented.

For the first strategy, utilizing a well-rounded committee, the Chief of Police should select the committee members. Nominations should first be forwarded for those interested in the process, as opposed to an assignment of someone who does not want the strategy to succeed.

The committee should be facilitated by the Division commander, insuring all ideas and interests are put “on the table” for discussion. This assessment could include surveys of the stakeholders to gain wider perspective than those could on the committee. Once formulated, it needs review from the Chief and City Attorney’s office for procedural and risk management issues. Upon resolution and approval by the City Council, a formalized job announcement, recruiting, testing, and selection process within established city personnel procedures would be undertaken. Hiring, evaluations, and monitoring for established performance factors would conclude the transition plan.

The second strategy, reclassification of existing civilian staff, a job analysis of what new duties must be conducted by city staff. Upon completion, labor union negotiations will be necessary to establish the new position. Recruiting, testing, and selection phases would be conducted. Additional hiring to backfill for those who transition to the new positions is necessary so as not to create a new void in clerical support.

The transition for the third strategy, providing additional support to the sworn complement, requires a needs assessment to determine what investigators need to enhance their abilities. A survey of other agencies for similar systems would provide background to avoid starting at “ground zero.” A demonstration of available systems is one option and the creation of a new, stand-alone system is another alternative. The hiring of clerical support, and purchase of the necessary equipment would be the final steps of this strategy.

Implications on Leadership

One leadership implication surrounds the issue of risk. Is it risky to involve civilian in police investigations? What about the fear of investigators to involve a civilian with their case? Will the POA think this is the start of privatization of police services, and lead to a reduction in the sworn force? The Department Head must answer these questions as a strategy is developed.

This leads to a second issue of trust. Can the stakeholders trust the organization and the process so that their performance is enriched? Can the community trust the Department to provide a level of service to meet their needs? All players must start with a degree of trust, albeit “blind” for some, in anticipation of results. The bottom line-results will dictate whether trust is lost or won. A loss in trust, both inside and out of the Department, would be devastating to the chances of future programs. Trust is earned, and leaders must insure that the process and end result do not tarnish it’s shine.

The ability of enabling others to act is another implication on leadership. Delegating an assignment relying on those in the process to develop a program sends a message of empowerment throughout the organization. Empowerment embodies Department values and may institutionalize a process that changes law enforcement leadership forever. We have relied on the chain-of-command and incremental steps with close supervision. A departure will inspire current employees, and encourage applicants to a new way of doing business.

Recommendations

The following recommendations can make the position of a civilian investigator a reality:

1. The Department regularly convenes meetings with stakeholders to discuss current issues, trends, and events. This groupthink will bring in fresh ideas and established resources to lead change. An eye towards the future will be necessary to gain a wider perspective.
2. The Department should work with POST and other organizations to explore the training of civilians in law enforcement. This may include reserve officer training, which would give civilian investigators police officer powers on duty.
3. Leadership training of line officers and civilians should be conducted. Too often we don't prepare our future for the future.

This will also assist with any change processes, since a different view, that of management and leadership, can be gained and utilized. Continual leadership training at all levels, including mixed ranks and team building exercises to develop those principles.

4. Expand the recruiting of sworn and civilian staff to reach a wider pool of candidates. Announcements in non-law enforcement publications, attendance at job fairs, and college campus interviews offer the Department an advantage of employing technologically competent people.

BUDGETARY AND FUNDING

All three strategies have costs associated with them, either in employment or equipment purchases. Other programs are pushing for extra dollars, and the city has faced budget cuts consistently over the last eight years. How can we afford to do this? More importantly, how can we afford not to?

If strategy one is employed, the recommendation could be to hire 10 civilian investigators. It would be reasonable to put a minimum cost of \$60,000 each, for a \$600,000 total. The other strategies call for similar annual expenditures. Where will the money come from?

One place to start would be grant funding. There is a plethora of grants available to law enforcement for innovative community policing programs, which this qualifies as one.

This could provide a maximum of funding for three years, during which time funds could be identified to support long-term implementation.

Other approaches, such as bond measures, are unreliable because they rely on an uncontrollable mood and political environment. The grant process allows the program to begin, and if successful, money will be found.

FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION

Established performance factors, such as time spent on cases, clearance rate changes, and a cost/benefit analysis serve as tools to monitor and evaluate the civilianization efforts.

Public surveys can be used to determine any change in the perceived level of police services. Data captured from this before and after “snapshot” may provide the information that justifies the program’s existence.

CONCLUSION

Identifying and implementing creative programs will insure law enforcement’s success as we move into the 21st century. Civilianization of police investigations can be an efficient use of resources, by making more sworn officers available for patrol, and hiring civilian specialists to conduct selected follow-up investigations. If we are to be successful in community-oriented policing, then we must truly embrace members of the community in a working partnership. The public we serve and agency the personnel deserve to be the benefactors of this innovation.

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